

The Eclectic Theosophist

FOLLOWING THE BLAVATSKY AND POINT LOMA TRADITION
ISSUED BI-MONTHLY BY POINT LOMA PUBLICATIONS, INC.
P.O. Box 6507, San Diego, California 92106
Editor: W. Emmett Small

Per Copy 75¢
Subscription (6 issues)
\$5.00; foreign \$5.50 (by air \$7.50)

No. 103
January/February 1988

YEAR OF RESPONSIBILITY AND OPPORTUNITY

What today, we ask, is best for the Theosophical Movement? The question is not presumptuous, but one, we feel, that claims the earnest attention of friends and members of the Theosophical Movement worldwide, especially this year of centennial celebration of the publishing of *The Secret Doctrine*. Let us ask, then, without retreat that hides from past errors or points only to merited accomplishments. Ask with barebones honesty: What today can we do more than before to hold more true to the basic reason for the founding and very existence of the Theosophical Movement as a spiritual directive force in the world?

First, what is our own responsibility? We get a clue from HPB's own words. "The feeling of responsibility," she said, speaking at one of the last meetings of the Inner Group in London (February 4, 1891), "is inspired by the presence of the Light of the Higher Ego." And she adds:

As the Ego in its cycle of rebirth becomes more and more individualized, it learns more and more by suffering to recognize its own responsibility, by which it finally gains Self-consciousness, the consciousness of all the Egos of the whole Universe . . . ^{*}

Have we, then, today learned enough by suffering? Learned enough at least to seize the fringes of true responsibility? The sad history of all great spiritual movements tells us that when their Inspirer leaves, the ongoing force weakens, followers become blind to the very reason and necessity for the original effort. Is that Nature's ineluctable law? Are we ourselves today, in making our own history, bound to follow that darkened groove? We know it need not be so. What then is our responsibility? This year there will be celebration. There will be ceremony and written words reflecting study and scholarly research and the devoted dedication of many. The theme will be "The Secret Doctrine". But is not more daring action called for? Is it not time for Theosophists of all affiliations to proclaim in universal voice that what they are dedicated to and teach is in mind and heart drawn from, a direct understanding of, what HPB gave out, that indeed there

are not "two theosophies"?

But here one says what you suggest smacks of dogma and in Theosophy there are no dogmas. True, there are no dogmas; that is a very cornerstone of theosophical attitude and work. Yet we have another clear fact. It is best put in the words of A. Trevor Barker, writing some fifty years ago. "Paradoxical though it may seem to some," he wrote,

no teaching calling itself theosophical will bear the test of a thoroughly impartial investigation, unless it is consistent with the teaching of H.P. Blavatsky; and precisely because *her writings bear the stamp of consistency with the recorded teachings of all the great Sages and Seers of Antiquity.* [Italics added]. *

The 'test is clear for all.

W.Q. Judge, too, put it clearly as far back as 1895. The real work does not depend upon the number of administrative bodies and outer forms of organization. "The Unity of the Theosophical Movement," he declared, "does not depend upon singleness of organization, but upon similarity of work and aspiration . . . "*** In other words, respondent to the time he was writing, that meant: work, study, and spread the original Teachings as given by the Masters through their disciple HPB.

The last five years have shown healthy signs of moving forward among several theosophical groups. The work of the Theosophical Network program is having effect in growing understanding of the history of the past. This is a beginning, and it gives heart to further undertaking. But beyond mere acclaim, action is called for. Tentative and timid steps should give way to bold seizing of opportunity by the forelock. The very *raison d'être* for the founding of the TS is *to lead*. We have the Teaching. We have the history of the past to guide in bold right doing. The world needs the great Teachings of Theosophy. What can be lost by leaders of the various theosophical administrations speaking out, unequivocably addressing the problems—and opportunity—facing the whole Movement today?

Year of Responsibility. Year of Opportunity. The door of 1988 opens wide. *The bells of New Year are ringing!* —W.E.S.

*Preface to G. de Purucker's *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, p.vii

***Echoes of the Orient*, II, p. lii; also Eek & de Zirkoff: *William Quan Judge: His Life and Work*, p. 33

A NEW AGE IS BORN

G. de Purucker

[January 15th marks the anniversary of the birth in 1874 of G. de Purucker. It is sometimes interesting, perhaps salutary, to recall how his years span historical events in The Theosophical Society, and to recall what his contribution has been. In issue No. 18, Sept. 15, 1973, of *The Eclectic Theosophist*, the editors included the following item. We find it fitting to reprint it today. Forty-six years have passed since that 'moment in history' referred to, and with today's perspective, we recall the time and the fact, and, in thought at least, seek to scan and weigh the events and burden of the intervening years. We leave the editorial introduction unchanged — Ed.]

Members of the once thriving Point Loma T.S., now scattered for the most part around the world in sturdy groups or lonely outposts, will remember that September 27 marks the day of the passing of G. de P. in 1942, just a week after the Autumnal Equinox. So swift, so unexpected the removal. Yet how the memories of those days, and the years before, cling to and indeed keep fresh and invigorate the heart and mind.

It is a new world since then. Not that "brave new world" that dazzled the unsophisticated eyes of Miranda looking upon the courtly attired (though shipwrecked) retinue of the Duke of Milan strangely lost on her little island; but surely a new world for our little island Earth in all that has happened since World War II in convulsion — and opportunity.

Our thought goes back to some eighteen months before G. de P.'s death. It was what we might call Syzygy Day, May 11, 1941, when the planets Mercury, Venus, Earth, Moon, Uranus, Saturn, and Jupiter were all in line with the Sun. On that occasion, at the close of the evening Temple meeting G. de P. spoke. For some strange reason we do not have a stenographic transcription of his words (a stenographic report was always made of what he said by his secretary, Elsie Savage — Mrs. Harry Benjamin); but below we give what Professor Charles J. Ryan jotted down in note-form. The reader familiar with Dr. de Purucker's style will immediately see what we quote is almost certainly *verbatim* as far as it goes, and also that it accounts for hiatus and brevity, it being recognized that the complete comment would be too difficult to take down in even a modified shorthand.

Readers will give what credence they will to Dr. de Purucker's words of thirty-two years ago — remembering Then and Now. They may also recall his article "Wind of the Spirit," published in the book of the same title, in which he warns of certain tragedy unless the West awakens spiritually and puts its "whole trust in the divine power of Nature and lives in accordance therewith." *Mene, Mene, Tekel Upharsin!: Weighed, Weighed, Wanting — the Persians!* That was 1940, when World War II was in its first stages, before America and Japan and Russia were involved. Before the day of *nuclear* science. — EDS.

. . . Today is gravid with destiny. Some may have misunderstood what I have said about this day. Many have had the intellectual curiosity to wonder what it would be like to live at one end of an Age and see the beginning of a new one. Well, we are now at a point where the old cycle dies. Tonight, about midnight or so, a new Age is born. As they say in England and France, *The King is dead, long live the King!* But the preparation for the New Cycle took place in 1898, February,

at the closing of the first 5000 years of Kali Yuga. But this is not the one I am speaking of now. This one (now opening) will affect the whole world, but particularly the Occidental portion. Coming events cast their shadows before, and I pray to the Gods that in the century to come the man of the West will govern himself with peace, with justice, and with honor. If not, his time is run. If he does, if he will collaborate with the cycle that is opening tonight . . .

How one's heart is wrung by man's folly! So beautiful and blessed are the Pathways of Right; so painful are the ways of wrong . . . Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall inherit All!

ABOUT INITIATION

H. N. Stokes

The following are extracts from an article by the Editor of *The O.E. Liberty Critic*, May-June, 1927; also published in the November 1937 issue of *The Theosophical Forum* (Point Loma).

I hold the perhaps very unorthodox opinion that no one can be made different by any ceremonial whatever from what he was ten minutes before it. Look at it in this way. A medical student, let us say, has studied the medical sciences for several years. From time to time he has to submit examinations which, successfully passed entitle him to continue his studies in the school he is attending and under proper instructors. Finally he is given a parchment stating he is an M.D. But he is not one whit different ten minutes after each examination than he was ten minutes before; nor is he in any way different ten minutes after his diploma is handed to him than he is ten minutes before. At no one moment has he been initiated into anything. You may, if you wish, call his successive examinations and his final graduation initiations, first, second, third, and so on. You may call the examiners initiators and the president of the college, who hands him his final diploma, the "Great Initiator," but it means nothing. At no one moment has he been initiated into anything — he has simply had a succession of labels stuck on him, and the sticking of these labels, as they do not in themselves accomplish anything, does not need to be accompanied with any sort of ceremonial whatsoever, and anything of the sort is just for show.

A medical degree is doubtless of value, as it is required by the authorities before he is permitted to practise as a token that he has had sufficient training; it serves on his shingle or the wall of his office to tell what he is. But all that he is he has made himself, by study, aided by his instructors. But brush aside all these formalities and he would be just as good, or as bad, a doctor.

There is a certain parallelism between spiritual growth

and growth in material knowledge, but with the difference that the former, being more an inner process, depends more on the development of the inner faculties and less on something coming from without. It is conceded that at proper times suitable instruction must be given, but this is rather with the aim of calling out the powers latent within one. It is needless to go into this further here. What I want to emphasize is that initiation is a gradual process, just as is the acquirement of medical knowledge, and that it is not something which proceeds by fits and jumps. To speak of a person being an initiate of the first, second and third degree and so on means about as much as dividing students into sophomores, juniors, seniors and finally graduates. It is quite true that moments may come when there is a rather sudden "expansion of consciousness," when ideas before only dimly or not at all perceived suddenly flash on one, just as one may suddenly have the solution of a problem flash on him, while in other cases the process is a slow one. I don't pretend to offer an explanation of this, though I object to the popular idea that whenever one gets a new conception it is because some superior being has thrust it into his mind. I object to this explanation because it is no explanation at all, for one must at once ask, how did this superior and external being get it? I see no essential difference between conceiving some useful invention and conceiving a new sort of safe-cracking or financial swindling. There are people aplenty who long ago abandoned the idea of being "tempted by the devil" who still attribute each brilliant idea to some kind-hearted angel anxious to help along.

Be that as it may, the idea that initiation is something sudden, rather than a gradual growth brought about by "self-induced and self-devised efforts," that it is something conferred rather than made by oneself is so alluring that the subject has been the field of exploitation without end. Do you really suppose that those wise beings who know the hearts of men will indulge in such puerile stunts as you find described in books on initiation? Do you think that they will put candidates through a course of interrogation and actually require a spoken oath just as if they were judges in a police court? I find the notion rather insulting. The perniciousness of this notion lies largely in the idea that an initiate is made from without rather than by his own efforts. Read the current literature on initiation. You will get the idea that as one progresses along the Path he finally comes to a closed door. This he cannot open himself; it has to be opened for him and he himself pushed or pulled through it by some sort of ceremonial supposed to stir up his spiritual bowels . . .

Make up your mind that "initiation" is a slow growth,

brought about through your own efforts aided when necessary by higher instruction when you have already made the best use of what has been placed at your disposal, and have learned by the mistakes you will make. But pay no attention to the talk about being suddenly boosted by some external process, or perhaps by some surgical operation on your chakras, into a new and higher state.

THE MIGHTY I AM: GOD, SELF, AND PARADISE

William R. Laudahn

Universal Self or I AM, as reflected in ourselves; God as the philosophic Absolute; and Paradise as the Nirvāna of Enlightenment: alone each is mighty, preparing the inner eye for wider horizons. Together, they are omnipotent, and—as Unity—ever present. While a narrow view would see the remoteness or total absence, an inspired Scriptural passage brought all of this "closer than hands and feet." Great value is therefore ascribed to Man and Nature as the Temple of Divine Life. In the inner sanctum, Humanity may cast off insecurity and a sense of worthlessness, the emotions of addicts and fanatics.

Retaining these resources and divine intimacy, while avoiding visions of an exalted Person, mystics and theosophers address and contemplate the Absolute as All-Inclusive. Not left out are high mental states known as the Eastern Nirvāna and the Western Paradise. Mentally and physically, we may well be confined, but as the Cosmic Self, we inhabit all spheres. In the impossible absence of Godhead, there would only be a possible Nothing! This is the foremost and final revelation of secret doctrines, affording spiritual and theosophic life its savor and inner meaning.

The Absolute stands forever as the Unmoved Mover and Source of expanding consciousness, growing and deepening insight. Appearances hurry by as the mystic ventures to the Heart of the Universe. At his best, Man is a self-conscious part of the Absolute, truly identical. The Infinite and Eternal allows for every possibility in the triple process of positivity-negativity-reconciliation.

Like a hologram, this perpetual motion portrays all forms and configurations, themselves changing. Permanence, in its Infinity, is the "World of No Form," physical or mental. Expressing these truths as best they can, are styles and types of religious doctrine. They range from orthodoxy to heresy, often the latter are more interesting and pertinent. In metaphysics, the twin doctrine of Karma-Reincarnation is popular, while regularly misunderstood. Less known are Life-Waves, Planetary Chains, Rounds and Races, and Lost Con-

tinents. While interesting, even absorbing, these and other truths cannot stand by themselves. Only One, as All, stands alone, the Absolute. With singleness of purpose, therefore, the mystics look to the Unity-in-Multiplicity, which, in itself, cannot be reduced or further defined.

To a friend of her last days, H.P. Blavatsky indicated that technical details in Arcana are not to be "cut and dried." (*How to Study Theosophy*, Robert Bowen, TPH, 1974, 8). In contrast to the typical mouthings of a mountebank (who would enforce literalness of the Word), she was speaking as a memorable metaphysician and mystic of the first rank. As "states of the Soul," all that we know or can imagine, in the past, present, or future, is symbolic of the Absolute.

Through the ages, mystic and gnostic philosophers (theosophers) knew this. It has been said that they practice "the science of the Absolute." Madame Blavatsky, in the article "What Are the Theosophists?" wrote that "the most important" object is to revive "the transcendental side of ancient (and Universal) Theosophy," the nature-searching, God-seeking science of the . . . mystics." (B.C.W. vol. 11, p. 100.)

Boundless sympathy for the Only One, felt as an ever-presence, is evoked by the Word or Logos of the Absolute Nirvānic Self, further experienced as the bliss of permeation of each in All. Divine Unity is the solitary subject of mystical contemplation and meditation. In the spectrum of consciousness from "below" to "above," inner and outer, great and small—the array is neither here nor there. The Absolute contains and exceeds without limits the content of each form and idea.

Perfection itself, completion, and totality—the Absolute—reflecting the greatest Good, makes possible life, love, and wisdom, even the knowledge of "good and evil." Faced with fundamental Potentiality and Neutrality in "absolute abstract Space and Motion," the remote limits attainable by powers of conception, The Secret Doctrine suggested the terms "Beness" and "Absoluteness." (1: 14, 21.) A mystical theosophic maxim is that "Man spirit is God spirit." The Self as Absoluteness is the observer and observed, at one with the One.

In the Spirit of God and Man, the Higher Self fills the otherwise empty content of conventional "personal" deities, historical or mythic saviors, other imagined gods and lower selves. It is tempting to hope that one fine day to come, the lesser gods and selves will take their rightful place in the shadows of the past. Many newly arrived personalities, however, need shady protection from the Light. They look to one of their own kind, a great Man or a wondrous Woman.

A remarkable woman, H.P. Blavatsky, on this issue,

emphasized that the Absolute is not just another Man-in-the-Sky. It is not a great Being apart from our many-sided world of competition, cooperation, and general, even cosmic circulations. Universal absoluteness is, at once, gross matter, "finer states of matter," spiritually, and even what is mystically called the No-Thing.

Unlike Jehovah, the Absolute hurls no thunderbolts, accompanied by ringing declarations. Outer nature, itself, causes enough harm to Man—who causes even more to himself. As the Absolute draws no lines, our self-discipline must operate in this world if the next world is to appear, to us, in better form. We must draw a line to the "wrong" side of which we venture not. Conditions are much better on the spiritually favored side. By way of mystical Gnosis, we know where our best interests lie.

While these statements may come easily, only the more subtle Self, Spirit, Soul and Higher Mind can have true Self-Realization. That is, through the theosophical trinity of "Atma, Buddhi, and Manas." It is said, however, that Buddha denied the "Self," but only as self-contained. He said that "there is an unborn, unbecome, unmade, incomposite and were there not, there would be no escape from the born, the become, the made and the composite." Pettiness, mediocrity, the small self is surpassed through the universal Self. In The Dhammapada (380) it is said that "For Self is the lord of self; Self is the refuge of self; therefore curb yourself, even as a merchant curbs a fine horse." Our lesser and finer selves are inspired by the Supreme Self aspect of the Absolute, whose Space is the Source and the Container of All.

As a word and idea, "All" is hardly appreciated; our limitations stand in the way. The totality of what is and has been in the historic past does not exhaust the endless possibilities and potentialities. The Eternal requires infinite spiritual Space. In this miracle of something from nothing; by way of archetypal Ideas, everything is possible, even the Impossible! If not now, later in the Eternal Present. Time, it is said, "keeps everything from happening at once."

Events, their perpetrators and creators, may tarry awhile, eventually departing, finally vanishing. Constellations of stars may endure for billions of years. When the fateful hour strikes, however, they may well ask, as we do, "where has all the time gone?" Their departed youth may seem like "only yesterday." The illusion of Māyā, is the verdict of the East. We are to consider the relative unreality of the visible and detectable world when compared to the One Reality.

So many of our cherished objects and ideas are wrapped up in the Great Illusion. As H.P.B. said, they are "real enough while they last." Eventually comes the parting of ways. The interval between beginnings and

endings, births, deaths, and rebirths may stretch out for some time, in certain instances thousands or millions of years. Recall the saying that "this, too, will pass."

What and where is permanence? Neither auras nor atoms, nor all in between are forever. If we wait long enough, the mighty will have fallen. Ideas and ideals and their mortal bearers will collapse. Heavenly constellations will disintegrate. Known or unknown, the Absolute will remain. Its aspect of emptiness is the basis for neutrality as well as potentiality and possibility. At the dawn of creation or manifestation, in any epoch, neutrality may not be evident. Some will be left out. More remains in the bosom of the Deep.

We are assured, however, that "all will be saved." Primal Love, then, will be reflected. Speaking of Spinoza's ideal of eternal and infinite Love, feeding "the mind with pleasure . . . from all pain," Will Durant was reminded of Jakob Boehme. (*Story of Civilization, VIII, 624*). In his *Varieties of Religious Experience* (p 408-409), William James quoted the German mystic as saying that this love

may fitly be compared to Nothing, for it is deeper than any thing, and is as nothing with respect to all things, forasmuch as it is not comprehensible by any of them . . . it is . . . free from all things, and is that only good, which a man cannot express or utter what it is, there being nothing to which it may be compared . . .

"Love," continued Boehme,

Is Nothing, for when thou art gone forth . . . from that which is visible, and become Nothing . . . then thou art in that eternal One, which is God himself, and then thou shalt feel within thee the highest virtue of Love . . . the soul . . . goeth out of the Somewhat into that Nothing out of which all things may be made. The soul here saith, *I have nothing* . . . for all that I am is no more than an image . . . , and only God is to me I AM . . . "

For most of us, only a portion of the Absoluteness as No-Thing is experienced, even as I AM, at any given time. Aside from our consciousness, this is beyond time. However, in the small, fluid period known as our "wide world," rightful life-management depends on discernment and discrimination, leading to as much self-conquest as humanly possible. After innumerable hard knocks, the World itself has found that "God helps those who help themselves."

To what are we to help ourselves, the temporary or the permanent? Basic religion points to heaven. The Supreme heaven is not a place. Persons and places are "blown out," small selves are annihilated in Nirvāna as a state of I AM. This "lower" plane on which we dwell affords an opportunity to prepare for the Ultimate, while all else turns from "solid" to finer matter, dissolving into moving waves of light and life.

Reliable interior guidelines for the mystic point to the Bliss of Nirvāna. It offers release and fulfillment.

Freedom is gained from the wheels within wheels, turning us over and over again until well-baked in the illusive ovens of Māyā. Simultaneously, as we now represent the development of potentiality in and from the Void, so Nirvāna will achieve our full promise, at least for "an eternity," in spiritual Fullness.

Heed, therefore, the Buddha. Turn from false teachings and lesser teachers. Become a "lamp unto yourself." Your light, then, will make clear the path, nor will it obscure the obstacles along the way. Who knows what abides there, hiding? Look out for yourself in the right way. The Supreme Self is ever safe. Wise, then, though not after the latest fashion, absorbed in Universal Self, Absoluteness will be seen, Nirvāna gained.

NOTE ON "ECHOES OF THE ORIENT—III"

Dara Eklund

Last year the publisher of this our third selection of the Writings of William Quan Judge announced that in this volume an important section would be W.Q.J.'s *Esoteric Suggestions and Aids*. This was greeted with enthusiasm by some, but others questioned the propriety of including material hitherto regarded as esoteric. We feel, however, that since Volume XII of *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, with its 237 pages of esoteric instruction, is now in print, students will find Mr. Judge's own commentary illuminating. Further, his writings are presented in a fashion to protect the esoteric nature of certain obscure teachings. In a paper of March, 1894, entitled *Recall of the Instructions*, he wrote:

Again, it is known that many members regard every word of the papers somewhat like a fetish, thinking that they are all secret and unattainable, whereas anyone who has read much knows that many parts are quite exoteric. Such parts were used by H.P.B. for the purpose of explanation. But as many look at every word as secret it is necessary now to hit on a plan for so arranging the matter that members who do not know what is common to literature may be plainly so informed; and also that certain esoteric points may be left blank for oral communication.* These two changes will be an improvement. To leave the Instructions out now unchanged, when the wholly inimical have them, would be unwise.—*Echoes III*, p.440

Another passage addresses the fact that those who took the pledge of secrecy were of a particular time and school:

We all know that the secrecy regarding the Instructions has been broken both by the Western and Eastern members.

* G.de Purucker states in *Esoteric Teachings*, Vol. II, p.14 (Point Loma Publications, 1987), "Furthermore, in the higher degrees, no record of any kind is made . . . everything in the way of teaching is given by word of mouth."

Instructions, rules, papers and documents have been given up to others, though as yet they have not all been published. What does this show, bad management or bad faith? I should say *bad faith only*, because in the very beginning H.P.B. . . . said that each one had to have his or her chance. She wrote specifically to me some years ago that she knew full well what she was doing, and intended to construct her teachings in such a way as to provide against the very treason and disloyalty which have been exhibited. —(*Op. cit.* p. 444).

Furthermore, Judge and Besant addressed the E.S. in August of 1894:

Publication by others of the Instructions relieves no one from the pledge of secrecy. Such a publication will do no harm, as the Instructions tend to promote spiritual growth and arouse high aspirations: on their face value they do not divulge occult secrets, although deep students can, by looking beneath the surface, find in them that which H.P.B. wished to impart.—(*Op. cit.* p. 453).

It is our hope that in this century, when so many false notions of Occultism and spiritual teaching are fostered in every corner of the globe, the commentary to the above mentioned Instructions will clarify the student's perceptions, strengthen corrective meditative practices, and avoid many of the psychic dangers evident in society today.

THE NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARIES OF H.P. BLAVATSKY

This volume, compiled and annotated by H.J. Spierenburg of The Hague, The Netherlands, will be regarded not only as a splendid send-off to this centenary year of 1988 of the publishing of H.P. Blavatsky's master-work *The Secret Doctrine*, but its value will stretch into the decades of the future. Dr. Spierenburg introduces his book with these pregnant words of HPB:

"Every act of the Jesus of the New Testament, every word attributed to him, every event related to him during the three years of his mission he is said to have accomplished, rest on the program of the Cycle of Initiation, a cycle founded on the precession of the Equinoxes and the Signs of the Zodiac."—(BCW, IX, 203, French text, and p. 225 of English translation.)

And Dr. Spierenburg in "How to Use the Book and the Notes" writes:

"The riches concealed in the nearly 10,000 pages of the books and journal articles written by H.P. Blavatsky, the articles contained in fourteen volumes of her *Collected Writings*, have so far been valued at their true worth by only a very few students. Even many of those who have occupied themselves with the products of H.P.B.'s pen all their lives fail to value them at their real worth."

"One who should be inclined to doubt this statement need only ask one of the above students what are exactly H.P.B.'s ideas about the *New Testament*. Readers in the present book will have come to realize that one who can make no answer to this question (or did not know the answer) has little to reproach himself with.

"Did H.P.B. possess real knowledge of the *New Testament*? Those who read the motto of the present book [HPB's words quoted above], and have a theological education or know the *New Testament* from publications by theologians, will no doubt formulate a certain answer. In October 1889 H.P.B. said: *The New Testament* is not a unity; it is as useless to try to reconcile the meaning of particular words out of their contexts or stereotype a special meaning . . . , (BCW, XI, p. 486). This certainly is saying something . . . "

[Editor's Note: As we go to press *The New Testament Commentaries of H.P. Blavatsky*, has not been completed but we expect delivery will be made to Point Loma Publications, Inc. early in Spring 1988. Accumulated back orders will be filled promptly.]

URANUS AND NEPTUNE

Mark Jaqua

A curious statement found in several places in G. de Purucker's works is that both Uranus and Neptune are not members of the same "family" of planets as the six other visible planets closest to the Sun. Over the past twenty years we've discovered a good deal more about both these planets than was known in G. de Purucker's time, especially about Uranus which Voyager II passed in 1986. Neptune we know far less about, but hopefully Voyager II will still be operating when it passes this planet in 1989 on its way out of the solar system.

What we do know of these planets supports to some degree that they are indeed anomalies when compared with the six inner planets. Uranus, for one thing, spins on its axis at 90° to the rest of the planets. The other planets "spin like tops" in their orbits around the Sun, while Uranus "rolls" about its orbit. Uranus's moons are also mostly orbiting at a 90° orbit to the moons of the other planets. In the nebular theory of the origin of the solar system, it is held that the outermost planets should be the least dense of all the planets, as the lighter elements are thought to have been thrown out furthest from the central nebula, with the denser elements remaining toward the center. This theory holds true for the first six planets — generally becoming progressively less dense from Mercury to Saturn — while neither Uranus nor Neptune follows the pattern, both being

twice and two-and-a half times as dense as Saturn respectively.

In looking for correspondences between science and the Esoteric Wisdom it is perhaps helpful to remember that an Adept in his researches into Nature is not necessarily looking for the same flora and fauna or geology as the physical scientist. He is looking into the *inner* nature of things.

(See "Replies to an English F.T.S.", *BCW*, Vol V, 143 et seq.)

References: By G.dePurucker: *The Esoteric Tradition*, 190-4; and *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, 209, 520-41, *National Geographic Magazine*, January 1985, August 1986.

AND WE QUOTE . . .

New Diseases

Great strides have been made in the arts and in cure of diseases, but in the future, as the flower of our civilization unfolds, new diseases will arise and more strange disorders will be known, springing from causes that lie deep in the minds of men and which can only be eradicated by spiritual living. —*Blavatsky Collected Writings*, IX, 103

Warning

The spread of the knowledge of the laws of Karma and Reincarnation and of a belief in the absolute spiritual unity of all beings will alone prevent this drift [from materialism]. The cycle must, however, run its course, and until that is ended all beneficial causes will of necessity act slowly and not to the extent they would in a brighter age. As each student *lives* a better life and by his example imprints upon the astral light the picture of a higher aspiration acted in the world, he *thus aids souls of advanced development to descend from other spheres* where the cycles are so dark they no longer stay there.

—*Blavatsky Collected Works*, "Conversations on Occultism", IX, pp. 103-4.

A Forevision

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new: That which they have done but earnest of the things that they shall do;

For I dipped into the future, far as human eye could see, Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails; Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rain-

ed a ghastly dew From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-wind rushing warm, With the standards of the peoples plunging thro' the thunder-storm;

Till the war-drum throbbed no longer, and the battle-flags were furled In the parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe, And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law.

So I triumphed ere my passion sweeping thro' me left me dry, Left me with the palsied heart, and left me with the jaundiced eye;

Eye, to which all order festers, all things here are out of joint: Science moves, but slowly slowly, creeping on from point to point;

Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion, creeping nigher, Glares at one that nods and winks behind a slowly-dying fire.

Yet I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose runs, And the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns.

—Alfred Tennyson, 'Locksley Hall' (1842)

CHRISTMAS HUMPHREYS ON THE WRITINGS OF G. de PURUCKER

In reviewing posthumous works of G. de Purucker, Christmas Humphreys, editor of *The Middle Way* at the time, wrote:

(*Of Messages to Conventions*): "In three sections, Messages to Conventions in all parts of the world, Editorials from *The Theosophical Forum*, and extracts from letters of general interest, have this in common, that they breathe the same spirit of brotherhood which the Theosophical Society was founded to proclaim and apply. Whether exhorting a Convention to put aside all inessential differences, advising on the conduct of a Lodge, or assisting an individual enquirer, the message is the same—brotherhood. 'It is brotherhood, first, last and all the time, that should be the guiding principle in life, not only of each Theosophist's own life, but the policy guiding any Theosophical organization . . .' He is equally insistent on teaching the Teaching as we receive it, on keeping the doctrine pure. For though we change, and the understanding of the truth progresses, the truth itself does not change. A Theosophical Society, like a Buddhist Society, must have a clear-cut system teaching to proclaim, and though

all may accept or reject it as they please, it cannot be deliberately altered without betraying the Teachers from whom the Message came."

(Of *Wind of the Spirit*): "The range of the present volume is enormous, and as pure Theosophy and original Buddhism necessarily cover much of the same ground, there is much here of Karma and Rebirth, as of the relation of the Ancient Wisdom to Contemporary life. In *extempore* addresses there is a freshness of diction and thought not always preserved in formal speeches or lectures, and it is fortunate that so much admirable wisdom has been preserved. We look forward to the completion of the trilogy, for the use of all Theosophists who place truth higher than labels and personalities."

(Of *Studies in Occult Philosophy*): "Its range is enormous, as large as the mind of the great scholar and Theosophical Leader who produced this sound and valuable material. Unlike many of the leaders of the Theosophical Movement of recent times, his teaching is all based on the Teachings given to the West by H.P. Blavatsky, in writing or by word of mouth. In many of the answers to questions, however, he assumes an omniscience which it is difficult to check. Whence the certainty with which he gives his audience detailed answers on matters not even mentioned in the works of H.P.B.? This, however, is a question of little interest to the Buddhist, for the latter is trained to take all teaching for what it is worth to him, rejecting the force of any presumed 'authority' and only concerned to see that it accords with reason and experience and seems helpful in the task of self-enlightenment.

"Theosophy regards all religions as aspects of a central body of truth, a Wisdom which is greater than any one of them. A Theosophist, therefore, studies all religions and is a member exclusively of none. But for this fact it seems that Dr. de Purucker would have called himself a Buddhist. "because if I were not a Theosophist I would most emphatically have accepted the doctrines of the Lord Gautama, the Buddha, as the most humane, the most philosophic, the most generous, the most princely, not only in their attitude towards men, but in the effect they produce upon man." It is not surprising, therefore, that he has much to say on Buddhism and his observations on Buddhism, Brahmanism and the Advaita Vedanta, which cover a consideration of the work of Sankaracharya, are particularly interesting.

Another matter which he sets out better than one usually finds it in Theosophical literature is the dissolution of our complex make-up after death, and its relation to spiritualism. He has much to say on the evils of this detestable practice, and the philosophic ignorance which engenders it. His knowledge of languages and of philosophy was considerable, and this makes his teaching on Jesus and the mistranslations of the Bible

of particular interest. The same applies to his knowledge of astronomy, which makes his talk on comets and meteors a compound of illumination and sheer poetry. In brief, this is a miniature encyclopedia of knowledge on matters of interest to all such Buddhists as do not feel constrained to confine their Buddhist reading to the Dhammapada."

MORE ON YEATS ON BLAVATSKY

John Cooper

In *The Eclectic Theosophist* for Nov. Dec. 1986 is an article by H.J. Spierenburg called "William Butler Yeats on Helena Petrovna Blavatsky." This article is based upon Yeat's *Memoirs, Autobiographies* and *Collected Letters* vol. 1. The purpose of this footnote to that interesting article is to point out that there is now a considerable amount of research being undertaken into the occult life of Yeats. This is a most unusual development as it is only over the last 30 years that this side of Yeats has been studied by scholars. Before that his time with the occult was seen as a youthful exuberance that was dropped once Yeats entered maturity. It can now be seen that the contrary is true and that Yeats maintained an interest in the occult for all of his adult life. This interest can be divided into

- his membership of the Theosophical Society and its Esoteric Section.
- his membership and adeptship in The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn.
- his work on the messages received through his wife that were published as *A Vision*.
- his return to Eastern thought as a result of meeting Purohit Swami.

The first book to deal with this side of Yeats was *The Unicorn, William Butler Yeats' Search for Reality* by Virginia Moore (Macmillan, New York, 1954). Miss Moore based this book on Yeats' published writings plus many unpublished papers dealing with magic and the Tarot. It states in this book that Yeats joined the Theosophical Society in 1887 when he was 22 after reading Blavatsky's *Isis Unveiled*. It was Yeats who took the beautiful Irish revolutionary Maud Gonne to meet with HPB. Gonne later wrote of this visit and remembered "the big pale luminous eyes in a yellow face." This book by Virginia Moore is fascinating reading and links together the poet with the occult Yeats.

The next study in this area came from India in a book called *W.B. Yeats and Occultism* by H.R. Bachchan (Samuel Weiser, New York, 1974). In this volume a letter of Yeats is quoted when he writes of HPB:

Come to see her when you are in London. She is the most human person alive, is like an old peasant woman, and is wholly devoted, all her life is but sitting in a great chair. For years she has written twelve hours a day.

As this is intended to be a note on Yeats and Blavatsky I will simply list the following books which deal with Yeats and the occult. Nearly all mention Madame Blavatsky.

Yeats's Golden Dawn by George Mills Harper, Macmillan, London, 1974.

Yeats and Magic by Mary Catherine Flannery, Colin Smythe, England, 1977.

Letters to W.B. Yeats Macmillan, London, 1977

W.B. Yeats and W.T. Horton, the Record of an Occult Friendship, G.M. Harper, Macmillan, London, 1980

Yeats the Initiate by Kathleen Raine, The Dolmen Press, Ireland, 1986. This volume is a collection of fourteen essays including "Yeats, the Tarot and the Golden Dawn"

A Critical Edition of Yeats's "A Vision" 1925, edited by G.M. Harper, Macmillan, London, 1978

The Making of Yeat's "A Vision", volumes 1 & 2, Macmillan, London, 1987.

There are three further points to make. The first is that there has been a revival of interest in the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, and several volumes have been published in recent years on this topic. Some are of interest to Theosophical historians including *The Alchemists of the Golden Dawn* by Ellic Howe (Aquarian Press, England, 1985), which is a volume of letters by the Rev. W.A. Ayon to E.L. Gardner, and others covering the years 1886 to 1905. As both Ayton and Gardner were active Theosophists there is information of value in this volume. Also Robert Gilbert, who has written several fascinating books on the Golden Dawn and A.E. Waite, has an article printed in *Theosophical History* for October 1987 showing the links between the Golden Dawn and the Eastern School of Theosophy under Blavatsky. (If readers do not subscribe to this journal, then they should do so and send a subscription to *Theosophical History*, Leslie Price, editor, 50 Gloucester Place, London, W1H 3H). The subscription is \$20 which covers four issues of the journal).

The second point is the renewed interest in William Blake the poet, painter and mystic. Kathleen Raine in her *Blake and Tradition* shows that Blake was very much part of the esoteric tradition, and links him with the Greeks and the Neoplatonists. The final point is the renewed interest in Thomas Taylor, who was a latterday Greek philosopher in 18th century London. *Thomas Taylor the Platonist* by Raine and Harper shows the immensity of his scholarship and his deep insight into Greek mystical thought.

BUILDERS OF FATE

The Greek word *moira* means "part, lot, share, fate"; and, as a proper noun and in the plural, meant the Fates or *Moirae*. Note the connection between the meanings, both in Greek and in English. It gives the idea that our fate or destiny is our *share*, our allotted fortune. Share in what? In a common achievement, a craft in which all share and each takes his proper part. This takes the mind away from the idea of personal profit or loss, an idea which is the keynote of an over-individualistic atmosphere. The religious idea of acceptance of the Divine Will and Wisdom, and the Norse idea of acceptance of whatever the Fates decree, are more or less in accord with this view. Should we regard ourselves as a victim suffering infliction, or as a workman doing his duty? It may be a consolation for the afflicted to take the latter view, as has been done by many writers of Consolations and Meditations.

If personality (not individuality) is illusory, pertaining to the lower planes but not to the higher, then all problems take on a new color when viewed with this in mind. We are concerned with 'vaster issues', 'more stately mansions.' We are 'Builders'.

—Henry T. Edge

"CENTENARY HISTORIES"

During her recent visit to Calgary, Joy Mills and I discussed dozens of Theosophical topics. Over the past 25 years or so we have occasionally, perhaps inevitably, found ourselves on opposite sides of the fence on several controversial issues. However, rather than argue *ad nauseam/ad infinitum* or else retreat in high dudgeon, we friendly acknowledge differences and wait for opportunities to resolve them.

Not surprisingly, she disagrees with several of my opinions regarding her new book, *100 years of Theosophy* (see review, C.T., Jul-Aug.'87). In particular, she thought my assessment of her treatment, and that of Leslie Smith (in *100 Years of Occultism*), of William Q. Judge was unwarranted. Fair enough.

Joy made the point, which I concede is valid, that the Judge question will never be properly settled until all archives are opened for objective evaluation. (Re-evaluation in some instances.) If such could be achieved, she suggested an impartial committee could be established to review all the available evidence. As a sceptic of long standing, I doubt if impartiality is possible in this matter, at least initially. But why not a committee representative of all positions on the Judge question? And hopefully including a few fresh minds not yet made up!

On the basis of earlier semi-official intimations, Joy thinks that the Adyar T.S. and E.S. archives would be

readily opened provided all other sources would reciprocate. Well, what more could be asked? Will all interested parties now please state unequivocally if they will agree to cooperate?

H.P.B. said: "Make your activities commensurate with your opportunities." Here's a wonderful opportunity—who will be the first to act?

—Ted G. Davy (*The Canadian Theosophist*, Sept.-Oct., 1987)

THE NEW YEAR WISDOM FESTIVAL

Nicholas Weeks

Some Theosophists have kept the Wisdom Festival on January 4th ever since Helena P. Blavatsky first suggested it in 1890; but it has yet to become popular. This brief notice will, hopefully, encourage all people of goodwill to form groups and participate in it.

Although HPB does say that January 4th has been consecrated to Wisdom for ages, she does not say why it should be the esoteric New Year's day. Possibly this day was chosen because it is when our planet comes closest to the Sun each year. Thus the Earth absorbs both vital and spiritual inspiration as it begins to breathe in energy for the new year.

Here is what HPB wrote on the subject:

It is January the 4th which ought to be selected by the Theosophists—the Esotericists especially—as their New Year. January is under the sign of Capricornus, the mysterious *Makara* of the Hindu mystics—the 'Kumaras', it being stated, having incarnated in mankind under the 10th sign of the Zodiac. For ages the 4th of January has been sacred to Mercury-Budha, or Thoth-Hermes. Thus everthing combines to make of it a festival to be held by those who study ancient Wisdom.

—*Blavatsky Collected Writings*, Vol.12, p.76.

Although 'festival' does not have the meaning of a grand party or celebration, I would suggest HPB is using it in the sense of a *sacred festival*, a feast and fulness not from food, drink and pleasure, but from spiritual inspiration and aspiration.

Every person who draws the breath of life affects the mental and moral atmosphere of the world. . . Those who do not help to elevate the thoughts and lives of others must of necessity either paralyze them by indifference, or actively drag them down. . . And let no one imagine that it is a mere fancy, the attaching of importance to the birth of the year. The earth passes through its definite phases and man with it; and as a day can be colored so can a year. The astral life of the earth is young and strong between Christmas and Easter. Those who form their wishes now will have added strength to fulfill them consistently.—(BCW 9, pp.3 & 5)

Every man or woman is endowed, more or less, with a magnetic personality, which when helped by a sincere, and

especially by an intense and indomitable will—is the most effective of magic levers placed by Nature in human hands—for woe or for weal. Let us then, Theosophists, use that will to send a sincere greeting and a wish of good luck for the New Year to every living creature under the sun—enemies and relentless traducers included. Let us try and feel especially kindly and forgiving to our foes and persecutors, honest or dishonest.—(BCW 12, p.67.)

As to how these Wisdom Festivals should be celebrated: groups can design their own approach as simply or richly as they wish. I would only suggest these keynotes for any Wisdom Festival: (1) an altruistic group meditation that benefits "every living creature"; (2) a group recitation of previously agreed upon beneficent vows or pledges; (4) individual practice during that day of purificatory moral vows; such as fasting, emotional and intellectual as well as physical, and acts of service.

[Readers interested in further references as to the inner significance of the period from December 21st Winter Solstice to January 4th, two weeks later, are referred to the following works of G. de Purucker: *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, orig. ed. 1932, p.206, *the Esoteric New Year*; pp.207 and 223: *methods of computing the New Year*; *The Esoteric Tradition*, pp.1080-81, Jan. 4th marks one of the greatest ceremonies of the ancient Mysteries. These are available directly from Theosophical University Press, Pasadena, or from Point Loma Publications, Inc. — Ed.]

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Centenary Of The Publication of "The Secret Doctrine"

"1988 is a unique year," writes Hugh Gray, Gen. Sec. The Theosophical Society in England, announcing special celebrations to commemorate the publication of HPB's *The Secret Doctrine*. "To celebrate this special happening," he continues, "apart from our Annual Convention on 29 and 30 July, instead of our Summer School there will be a European Congress from 31 July to 5 August. The principal speaker will be our International President, Radha Burnier, who will give the Blavatsky Lecture and a public lecture in London. We are expecting a large international attendance and it will be a most memorable occasion."

Announcement is also made that hereafter T.P.H. (12 Bury Place, London) will be known as The Quest Bookshop. (Same address.)

SD Centenary Commemorated in the United States

As we go to press the only public celebration announced to date will be at Canoga Park, California, a conference to be held August 6-7, 1988. For full information write to Gene Meyer, co-ordinator, 7900 Emerson Ave., Westchester, California 90045.

"Commentary—the 1900 Letter"

Readers are referred to the article under the above title in *Theosophical History*, October 1987 issue. In the editor, Leslie Price, raises interesting points. He states: ". . . the Letter is *prima facie* unacceptable to at least four groups of people, and poses some of the acutest problems in Theosophical History." The March-April 1988 *Eclectic* will include other pertinent commentary on this subject.

Theosophy Course at Philippine College

As an option in the regular curriculum now at Naga College in the Philippines is a formal course in Theosophy. This is a 'first' in that country, the title "Introduction to Theosophical Philosophy", and the instructor is Francisco A. Padua, Jr. who writes enthusiastically about this fine educational opportunity there.

Silver Jubilee of Theosophy/Science Study Group

Representing 25 years of promoting a theosophical approach to science, the Theosophy/Science Study Group is issuing a special souvenir edition of its bulletin. It will emphasize a holistic and humanistic approach towards issues raised by contemporary science, technology, and human development, and focuses on seven major themes: Holistic perspective in science; Ecological ethics; Development of the whole man; Conservation of energy resources and life; Disarmament and peace; Environment, integration and education; Humanism in technology and world welfare.

The Group is an allied activity of the Theosophical Society (Adyar). Dr. A. Kannan, Editor, writes: "The Silver Jubilee Souvenir Edition of the Bulletin will be especially appropriate for educational institutions, as it contains the thoughts of some of the finest minds in the scientific world who share the new holistic view that we live in an interrelated 'participatory universe'".

Send orders directly to Dr. A. Kannan, Theosophical Society, Adyar, Madras 600 020, India. Cost of the Souvenir Bulletin: US \$3.00; UK £2.00; AUS \$4.00; NZ \$6.00; Rs. 25; Canadian \$4.00. (Airmail is US \$1.00 extra.)

Protagonos

Yet another new publication effort is the bi-monthly issued by Mark Jaqua (M-793, Road 7, Napoleon, Ohio 43545). Yes, and its names is *Protagonos*. The first issue (10 pages) leads off with "What is Truth?" HPB's stirring article from *BCW IX*. Follow articles on "Mutual Toleration" by Tom Snyder, "The Face on Mars" from *Theosophical Sparks*, "Fear, the Great Destroyer" by G. de Purucker, and the editor's article on "Channelling." Jaqua writes: "My intention, so far, is to aim at

those half-in, half-out of the central theosophic Movement." We wish him well! Published 4 times a year; supported in part by free-will contributions; submission of material welcomed, as are comments and criticism.

Courses and Seminars at Krotona Institute of Theosophy

The 1988 Winter-Spring program has among its interesting courses and seminars: 'Theosophy and American Transcendentalism' (Dr. Mary Jane Newcomb, a past director of the TS in America); "Ancient Wisdom - Modern Insight" (Shirley Nicholson, senior editor in charge of Quest Books for TPH, Wheaton); "Light on the Crisis in Evolutionary Theory" (Patrick Milburn, a Stanford and Princeton-trained biologist); and, especially appropriate in this centennial year of the publishing of *The Secret Doctrine*, "The Secret Doctrine: One Hundred Years Later" (Joy Mills, Director of the Institute). For full program write to: Krotona Institute, School of Theosophy, 46 Krotona Hill, Ojai, Calif. 93023.)

Corrections to Some BCW Volumes

Dara Eklund, assistant compiler with Boris de Zirkoff, of Vols. XIII and XIV of *BCW*, informs us that the past year has seen the reprinting of several volumes of the *Blavatsky Collected Writings*. "The most significant reprint," she says, "is that of Volume XII. Plate III was redone with color tones so that the correspondences are now evident. Also readers will be pleased to note that the symbols on p. 567 for the Macrocosm and the Microcosm are now correct. (Later we noticed the original error had been discovered by Mr. Judge himself, and had been printed in the *E.S. Instructions and Aids*, as can be read on page 392 of *Echoes of the Orient*, Vol. III. just published.)."

This is basically good news despite the numerous typographical errors that have needed correction, for it indicates steady readership in these books which contain so much invaluable teaching. Dara adds: "In this work we have never lost sight of the monumental task that Boris de Zirkoff faced, while in very poor health during the last year of his life. He would have been pleased to see the beautiful work T.P.H., Wheaton has accomplished with these reprintings."

CONTRIBUTIONS

Our grateful thanks for the following contributions received since our last reporting: R.H., \$20.00; L.L., \$2000.00; S.L., \$200.00; J.S., \$20.00; E.L., \$48.00; D.McD., \$100.00; R.K., \$25.00; D.D.C., \$20.00.; S.A.P., \$10.00; J.A., \$16.00; M.R., \$15.00; G.C., in memory of George Curtis, \$25.00; D.v.d.S., in memory of John van der Schuur, \$50.00; C.R., \$25.00

FROM LETTERS RECEIVED

R. Thibodeau, Mayflower Bookshop, Berkley, Michigan.—I love the volume on Space (*Esoteric Teachings*, Vol. 3, G. de Purucker). All of these 12 volumes will be great, I'm sure!

Marc Genar, Sint-Truiden, Belgium.—I am in complete agreement with Mr. G.A. Farthing's *Superb* Proposal.

Willy Schmit, The Hague, Holland.—In connection with the letter from Mr. W. Dallas TenBroeck, I happened to read in the *The Theosophical Forum* for 1937 the correspondence between Mr. Herbert Ganahl and the Editors about leadership. The still prevailing opinion with U.L.T. regarding leadership is scrutinized and dealt with adequately. In the *Forum* for the same year (April 1937) is another interesting correspondence between H.R.W. Cox and Charles Ryan relating to the alledged collapse of the T.S. at the close of the 19th Century (Mrs. Cleather's opinion). The answer from Charles Ryan is splendid. Because I had recently read Mrs. Cleather's books, this correspondence came at the right moment.

It is interesting to follow the threads of theosophical history, for in this way the origin of misconceptions can be traced. Besides, one is reminded once again of the very real dangers connected with occult teachings. Within this scope I can view the insertion in your last *Eclectic* of the entire text of the Master's letter to Annie Besant. Another thread of the tapestry, having its appointed time to come to the surface.

Irmgard Scheithauer, Berlin.—Theosophy is not a matter of learning by heart. One must try to see and to understand the coherence of all the teachings, and the wide and bright picture it gives, and then explain it in simple words with examples of daily life and/or scientific recent sayings or discovery or whatever may have happened in the world. Theosophy is a living thing; it is life itself.

J.H. Dubbink, Bilthoven, Holland.—The Dutch Buddhist periodical *Saddharma*, Sept. 1987, carries a lengthy review of the book, *The Twilight Language: Explorations in Buddhist Meditation and Symbolism* by R.S. Bucknell and M. Stuart-Fox (Curzon Press, London, 1986). I quote (and shorten) some passages of the book review: "An essential question arises: Has the Buddha given esoteric teachings, expressed in symbols? The authors conclude (for the time being) that that is very probable." You will be aware of the fact that this esoteric buddhism has been one of the teachings of HPB which she promoted in the *SD*, especially in the Vol. III, now also in *Collected Writings*, Vol. XIV, pp. 442 and following.

I visited Sri Lanka twice some 10 years ago. I remember having met there different Australian elder student novice-monks. I was following a course for foreign students at a succursl of Peredaniya University Kandy. When I (and other 'western intellectuals') were asked difficult questions, the monk-in-charge invariably answered "wait till tomorrow" — and then a young European novice was allowed to answer the questions of western students, the implications of whose questions were often not understood by the elder monks... I hope the book in question belongs in that line.

W. Dallas TenBroeck, Calabasas Park, Calif.—I read with dismay the reproduction of an alleged letter said to be from the Master KH .. and apparently endorsed to a letter from one B.W. Mantri in 1900 to A. Besant. I suggest that those of us who are students of *The Mahatma Letters* look most closely at the diction and expressions used therein. They in no way seem to have the same kind of 'line' that the letters to Mr. Sinnett and Mr. Hume, admittedly sent much earlier, do. Its authenticity is suspect, to me.

The first series of *Letters From the Masters of Wisdom* edited by C. Jinarajadasa, was published in 1919. This original consists of only 36 letters, and is of a total of 124 pages, including Mr.

Jinarajadasa's editorial notes at the end. If, now, the 6th printing in 1948, shows over 46 letters, some have been added in the intervening years. The second Series of *Letters from the Masters of Wisdom* was originally published in 1925. I have a copy. The letter #46 you refer to in your issue #101 is not included in that either.

I am puzzled by these additions. I always try to go to the original, or to photographic reprints, as I have found over the years that the accuracy of various editions does not agree with the originals in every case. I am of the belief that an editor can have a difference of understanding with an author, but in cases of dealing with THEOSOPHY, especially Those SOURCES which we desire to contact directly, there is no excuse for editors to introduce *unmarked changes into the text*.

In this regard I think of HPB's article "My Books", in which she speaks of the editorial changes that marred some parts of *Isis Unveiled*. I also noticed that later 'editions' of *The Mahatma Letters* 'corrected' the text without indication of correction, when compared with the first printing of the book. I feel, for the benefit of students, any changes ought to be dealt with as footnotes, or marginal notes. The 30,000 or more changes made in the text of *The Secret Doctrine* (3d edition, edited by G.R.S. Mead and A. Besant in 1896) are another case in point. The so-called "3d Volume" of *The Secret Doctrine*, from what has been written about its genesis, indicates to students that it has nothing to do with the actual text prepared by HPB, which she is said to have destroyed shortly before her death in 1891. This 3rd and 4th volume are described by her in several places in the original printing of the S.D.

Any student who desires to know what is the Message of the Masters, as transmitted through HPB, the *Messenger* to us, has to go to her unedited writings, preferably in original, and to those of WQJ. Let those be cross-checked with *The Mahatma Letters* to see whether there are variables or turnings away from that unitary Message. She is the one who has furnished the information that has enabled researchers to trace the *unity of all religions*, the antiquity of Nature's Science, and the logic inherent in a universal philosophy.

I would like to remind fellow students that with the death of HPB and WQJ the direct lines of communication with the Masters and the Lodge became private. In any recipients divulged 'messages' intended for their use alone, in order to bolster the regard in which they might be held by others, confusion was bound to ensue — as it did following HPB's death, which resulted in the so-called 'Judge Case'. The puerile inferences drawn by those who made accusations, and who used private matters in public, brought Theosophy and the concept of Theosophical Brotherhood into public ill-repute.

[The above writer is referred to pages 296-7 of the volume *The Theosophical Movement, 1950 - 1975*, issued by the United Lodge of Theosophists, Los Angeles. The 1900 Letter under the question is therein quoted, and comment on it seems to express a "ULT" tacit endorsement of its *bona fides*. — Ed.]

Point Loma Publications

The 12 volumes of *Esoteric Teachings* by G. de Purucker are now available. Costs of production have been somewhat higher than anticipated, so price for the set is \$72.00; per volume \$7.00. Our most grateful thanks go to those who have helped us in this production.

Volume III of *Echoes of the Orient* (The Writings of W.Q. Judge) will be published by the end of January. Price: \$18.75.